

What's going on with the weighted lottery idea?

Early in 2013, the Four Rivers Lottery Group was informed that the contractor responsible for the National Recreation Reservation Service (NRRS) permits and reservations system was about to start developing the programming needed to offer weighted lotteries within the next few years.

Weighted lotteries have been a hot topic for permitted rivers for many years, and the 4 Rivers group was asked if we were interested in moving to a weighted drawing system for our lotteries. If interested, we could submit our requirements as part of the contractor's development of the programming.

So in February, we sent out emails to the 2013 lottery applicants for the 4 Rivers, letting them know that weighted lotteries might soon be possible, with specific proposed parameters listed online. Over 21,000 emails were sent out; almost a 1,000 responses were received, with the majority in favor of a weighted system, especially for the Selway and the Middle Fork.

As the responses were being tallied, the contractor gave us a cost estimate of \$45,000 to develop the programming needed for the proposed weighted lottery system, with implementation possible for the 2015 lottery drawing.

We then asked the NRRS folks if they would cover the \$45,000 cost of the weighted lottery development, since other programs would likely be able to use a similar system in the future.

During our funding discussions with the NRRS, we were advised that the current contract expires at the end of September in 2016. The NRRS folks were beginning to draft a new contract, and informed us that this new contract will require the development of weighted options for lotteries.

At this point, we were informed that since programming options for weighted lotteries will be included in the next contract, the NRRS would not cover the \$45,000 cost to have this programming developed for the 2015 lottery.

For now, weighted lotteries have been tabled until the new contract is in place. Once that functionality becomes available, a weighted lottery may be implemented for the Selway and/or Middle Fork of the Salmon Rivers.

We want to thank everyone who took the time to send in their comments. Stay tuned.